

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

1. *Early Westmorland M.P.s 1258-1327*. By George S. H. L. Washington. (Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archæological Society, Tract Series, No. xv: Kendal, Titus Wilson, 1959: pp. x + 97).

In the 'twenties it began to be widely understood that if we were not to be content with flaccid generalisations about the history of Parliament in England it would be necessary to study systematically the careers and the connections of the individual members. Who were the men who came to any particular parliament; what brought them there; what background of education and experience in public life had they; how, if they were members of the Commons, did they come to represent this or that constituency; had they special interests which they would try to promote; were they by reason of family relationships or tenure or sentiment likely to act in this or that or every matter in company with a group or in the wake of some patron or leader? As was clear from the *Interim Report of the Committee on the Personnel and Politics of the House of Commons*, published in 1932; only when questions of this kind had been answered could a proper understanding of Parliament's history be expected. A big task had to be envisaged — no less, in the first instance, than a complete series of biographies of the thousands of men who have formed the parliaments of this country from the 13th century down to modern times. With characteristic enthusiasm the late Col. Josiah Wedgwood, M.P., betook himself to the task of organisation. Periods were plotted out and assigned; a certain amount of government support was secured; and in two fat volumes published in 1936 and 1938 an account of the membership of the parliaments between 1439 and 1509 was made available. The war and perhaps also a growing realisation of some of the difficulties involved slowed the project down, and we are still waiting for further volumes. But the scheme has been thoroughly reorganised and is still very much alive. Teams are working on various periods under the direction of eminent scholars, while a headquarters and a repository for the material accumulated are provided at the Institute of Historical Research in Bloomsbury.

It has always been appreciated, however, that this is a task which cannot adequately be accomplished from London alone.

Local knowledge of records and terrain is essential to deal with problems of tenure, pedigree and the like which beset the biographer of the country gentlemen and burgesses who found their way to parliaments. Quarter of a century ago Dr C. H. Hunter Blair and his collaborators published the biographies of the medieval M.P.s for the county and boroughs of Northumberland. Now Mr Washington has usefully closed the gap for Westmorland and its only represented borough, Appleby, down to the death of Edward II. This earliest period of Parliament's history, when the representatives of the local communities were just beginning to emerge as a fairly regular element, poses specially severe problems. There are questions of definition. What was a "parliament" at this time? For example, was the York assembly of May 1300 as much a parliament as the parliament of November 1295 or the Carlisle parliament of January 1307? And whom are we entitled to call a "member of parliament"? Were, e.g., the four knights who came up for Westmorland to the October parliament of 1258 members of parliament in the same sense as Sir Hugh Lowther and Robert Sandford were members in 1320? There are difficulties of evidence. Between October 1258 and July 1290 many parliaments were held, to a fair number of which representatives of the shires and to some of which borough representatives were summoned. But not until the assembly of July 1290 do we again hear of knights for Westmorland; not until November 1295 do we get the first return for Appleby. Even when the evidence for the names of members survives, identification is by no means always easy or certain. Of the William Kirkby who was returned for Appleby on six occasions from November 1325 Mr Washington wisely remarks: "William of Kirkby is such a common name in Westmorland during the first half of the fourteenth century, that identification of this member has not been attempted." The multiplicity of members of the Goldington family who were returned for Appleby and at times for the shire at this period is such that one cannot feel sure that Mr Washington has completely succeeded in separating out the individuals.

Despite these difficulties, for the 36 assemblies between July 1290 and January 1327 to which the shires were ordered to send representatives, Mr Washington has felt able to name the Westmorland members on 31 occasions. The exceptions are the parliaments of November 1296, October 1297, March 1300, May 1306 and the assembly of May 1316. In the case of the May parliament of 1306 we can be sure that no knights for Westmorland were returned: the writ of summons, dated 5 April at Winchester, did not reach the sheriff until 26 May, too late to

be put into effect — and in any case “omnes milites et libere tenentes sunt in Marchia Scocie cum domino Henrico de Percy per preceptum domini Regis ad reprimendum maliciam Scottorum” (*Parl. Writs* i, 176). Names of the burgesses are of course somewhat less numerous (they were not always called for); but on 22 occasions Mr Washington can tell us who were returned for Appleby. For all these members, arranged alphabetically, together with the four knights of 1258, he has brought together what can be gleaned about their lives and careers. This must have been a most laborious and exacting business, which only loyalty to Westmorland and great affection for its past could have sustained. For it has involved recording every passing mention of a Westmorland member: in his lawsuits, his various employments as a commissioner of the crown, his interests as a landowner, a fighting man, a husband and a father. Despite Mr Washington's best efforts, some of the members inevitably remain dim figures; but it is clear that he has drawn on a wide range of sources, both local and governmental, in print and in manuscript.

Though I have no title at all to criticize Mr Washington's local and genealogical knowledge, a number of more general points seem to call for notice. I feel sure that we ought not to call Sir Roger Burton a M.P. for Westmorland in August 1295 (p. 16). He was summoned to the parliament of that date among the king's justices as an individual, not as a county representative. By a slip on p. 31 William Goldington is called M.P. for Appleby in 1305 and 1307, instead of in 1302 and 1305; by another, on p. 53, Sir Hugh Lowther the younger is returned for Westmorland in 1322, instead of October 1320. What of Mr Washington's claim to have amended on five occasions the *Official Return of Members of Parliament* (1878)? Two of his instances may be accepted without hesitation: the record *de expensis* allows him to name the knights of October 1258; the original return, now available, has enabled him to correct the name of one of the Appleby burgesses in January 1307. But doubt may be felt about the remaining instances, and the reproach may justly be made that here Mr Washington does not make it sufficiently clear to his readers that he is dealing in conjectures, not in ascertained fact. Let us take them in turn. Mr Washington (p. vii) has Westmorland represented at the meeting of November 1294 by Sir Thomas Pickering and Sir Matthew Redman. We have almost no direct evidence for the names of the knights at this assembly. Two for each county were summoned by writs dated 8 October; on the next day further writs summoned two more from each county. On the

opening day of the assembly two knights per county were appointed as assessors and executors of the tenth on moveables granted to the king; their names have survived on the patent roll (*CPR* 1292-1301, pp. 103-4). In 1925 Professor Sayles unearthed a fragment of evidence which shows that in two counties these assessors and executors were the same as the knights returned to the summons of 9 October. It is not unreasonable for Mr Washington to assume that the same thing happened in respect of Westmorland. But he does not state explicitly that this is no more than inference; and that even if it be correct, it gives us the names of only two of the four Westmorland knights of 1294. Moreover, of the two names given, one appears to be wrong. The Westmorland knights enrolled as assessors and executors were Pickering and Sir Richard Preston, not Pickering and Redman. Redman indeed, on the strength of the enrolment, may be considered a knight for Lancashire in November 1294; but not for Cumberland also (p. 66), nor for Westmorland (p. vii).

With the assembly summoned for York on 20 May 1300, recourse has again to be made to construction. Writs for the sending of three knights from each county to this assembly, to discuss the better keeping of the Charters, etc., were dated 27 March. No return has survived for Westmorland, nor for a large number of other counties. But at Bury St Edmunds on 10 May three knights per county were appointed by the king to see to the better observance of the Charters, etc., the Westmorland names being Hugh de Multon, John de Goldington and Robert de Wessington (*CPR* 1292-1301, pp. 515-7). Since in the case of the counties for which returns for the York assembly survive the members named coincide with the commissioners appointed on 10 May, it is not unreasonable for Mr Washington to assume that the Westmorland commissioners were returned to the York assembly. But again this is inference. And if it be correct, is not John de Goldington just as much entitled to a place in the list of Westmorland M.P.s and to a biography (he is given neither here) as Multon or Wessington? Incidentally, Mr Washington's remark about the last-named (p. 87): "Thanks to the influence of his wife's family, the Stricklands of Sizergh, Robert was returned as M.P. for Westmorland to the Parliament of May 1300" seems to go far beyond any evidence he discloses here. A further complication about Westmorland's representation in this assembly is that Mr Washington quotes William Prynne to the effect that Hugh de Lowther, not Hugh de Multon, made the third with Goldington and Wessington. I have not been able to consult Prynne's *Brevia Parliamentaria Rediviva* and ascertain on what

he based his statement. But is it not possible that Prynne was here referring to the enrolment of the commission of 10 May and misread his source — as he seems to have misread “Robert Neville” for Robert Fraunceys as burgess for Appleby in 1309 in his *Fourth Part of a Brief Register of Parliamentary Writs*?

For the Lincoln Parliament of January 1301 Mr Washington claims to have found three knights of the shire for Westmorland: in itself an odd circumstance, for the writ of summons asked for two only, and the other counties returned two only. No return for Westmorland has been found, nor is mention made of Westmorland members in the enrolment of writs *de expensis*. Whence has Mr Washington derived the names of Michael de Harcla, John de Helton and Henry de Warthecopp? The answer would seem to be, from letters patent dated 24 October 1301 appointing certain persons elected thereto by the commonalty of their counties to assess and collect the fifteenth granted to the king in the Lincoln parliament (*Parl. Writs*, i, 107). But the inference from the appointment of Harcla, Helton and Warcop as assessors and collectors for Westmorland in October to their return as knights of the shire in January seems hazardous in the extreme. Comparison between the members returned for other counties to the Lincoln parliament and the assessors and collectors for those counties appointed in October shows no such correspondence. In this case I think Mr Washington's addition to the *Official Return* must be decisively rejected. A final puzzle concerning Mr Washington's treatment of the Lincoln parliament remains. In his list of knights and burgesses on p. vii he shows William Green and William Spavys returned for Appleby to the May assembly of 1300. This is certainly a slip; burgesses were not summoned to this assembly. And in the text (pp. 35, 73) they are said to have been returned to the January parliament of 1301. It may be so — but it is unsatisfactory not to be given a precise source for this statement. If it is correct, it increases knowledge; if it is not, it introduces ghosts.

Return to a parliament did not necessarily mean that the member attended. When returning the names of those elected for Westmorland to the “model” parliament of November 1295, the sheriff explained that none of them would be able to come up for the parliament, inasmuch as all within his bailiwick had been ordered to muster before the bishop of Durham and the Earl Warenne for service against the Scots (*Parl. Writs*, i, 44). Sir Walter Strickland and Sir Thomas Beetham were returned as knights for Westmorland to the parliament of July 1313, but from the enrolled writ *de expensis* it appears that it was Sir Matthew Redman and Sir Nicholas Leybourne who attended.

At times Westmorland's representatives must have arrived late: as in January 1307, when the sheriff received the writ of summons two days after parliament was due to assemble at Carlisle. We know that the absence of writs *de expensis*, even in the case of knights of the shire, is not absolutely conclusive evidence that the members returned did not attend. But when we find in February 1305 a writ issued for Sir Hugh Lowther, and none for his fellow member Sir Nicholas Leybourne, or in October 1318 a writ issued for Richard Morland, and not for Roger Carnaby who was returned with him, we have grounds for reasonable conjecture. It would have been helpful in estimating the assiduity of attendance by the Westmorland knights had Mr Washington indicated when writs were issued and when not. On a summary calculation I take it that we can be quite sure that the shire was represented at 17 out of the 28 parliaments or assemblies between January 1301 and the end of Edward II's reign to which representatives were summoned.

What general conclusions for parliamentary history can we draw from Mr Washington's labours? Impressions gained from the evidence of other counties is usefully confirmed. There were not enough knights to go round (and in any case it was cheaper for the county to send a man who was not a knight): of the 36 men who were returned in this period as knights of the shire for Westmorland only 22, it would appear, *were* knights (for these and other figures I have drawn from Mr Washington's materials I do not claim absolute accuracy — there is a margin of doubtful cases). The exaggerations of the late A. F. Pollard in his *Evolution of Parliament* concerning the unpopularity of parliamentary duty and the infrequency of re-election are again refuted. Of the 63 members for shire and borough listed by Mr Washington for the period 1290-1327 just over half (32) were returned to one parliament only. But others must have become experienced parliamentary hands. The outstanding case is that of Robert Sandford, returned for Westmorland on 7 occasions between 1316 and 1325, and on 10 occasions in the next reign. This remarkable frequency may well be linked to the fact that Sandford often served as under-sheriff: but returned he was, and on the evidence of the writs *de expensis* he certainly attended the assemblies of July 1316, February and October 1324, and November 1325. Then we have Sir Robert L'Engleys, returned 5 times for Westmorland between 1295 and 1312, and his second son, William, returned 4 times before 1327, and another 4 times in the next reign. Sir Walter Strickland was returned 6 times for the shire between 1307 and 1324, and again in 1332. Sir

Thomas Beetham was returned 5 times for Westmorland and once for Lancashire within this period; Sir Matthew Redman, who was returned 3 times for Lancashire, managed to sit (though it seems he was not returned) for Westmorland in July 1313. If Sir Robert Leybourne was returned 4 times for Cumberland and once only for Westmorland, his brother Nicholas was returned or sat for Westmorland on 4 occasions. A most interesting instance is that of William de Goldington, merchant and mayor of Appleby, who married a daughter of Sir Thomas Hastings and spanned two worlds which historians are at times apt to separate too decisively. He was returned (if the identification is secure) for Appleby in 1302, 1305 and 1315, and for Westmorland in January and November 1307.

Mr Washington's accounts of their careers make it clear that men of this kind cannot be dismissed as cyphers. But it would be premature as yet to attempt generalisation about the political importance of these early representatives of the communities. There were marked peculiarities about Westmorland. It was a remote county — its members attending a Westminster parliament were allowed 7 days' expenses to come, and as many to return — and at this period its energies were much engaged by the Scottish war. Above all, the prominence of the barony of Appleby and the hereditary sheriffdom of the Cliffords were factors hardly to be paralleled elsewhere. At times the electoral body for Westmorland, the county court, must have looked like a Clifford baronial court. A notable number of the members listed by Mr Washington held of the Cliffords; possibly the explanation of Robert Sandford's remarkable career as a representative lies in a connection with them. But they did not have matters — perhaps did not even seek to have matters — all their own way. Mr Washington (p. 78) does well to point out how Sir Walter Strickland (who had not, I think, any tenurial ties with the Cliffords) represents an important family nucleus in Westmorland at this period: he himself, his father, his brother, his father-in-law and his brother-in-law were all returned for the shire, and other contemporary members were allied to him by birth or marriage. How far was the Cliffords' influence affected by a long minority or by a disaster such as Boroughbridge? How far were such vicissitudes reflected in the parliamentary representation of Westmorland? Mr Washington's work is of a kind which can never be quite final; new details will turn up; amendments will become necessary. Its merit is to provoke such questions, and to offer a collection of material to which those who seek to answer them will have to turn. H. S. OFFLER.

2. *York Metropolitan Jurisdiction and Papal Judges Delegate (1279-1296)* by Robert Brentano; 293 pp., illustrated, \$6.00 (University of California Press, vol. lviii, 1958).

This interesting and scholarly work is largely based upon the story of an intricate dispute between the metropolitan see of York and the see of Durham, and the tangled skein has been fascinatingly unravelled by Mr Brentano's researches. He has made a valuable contribution to 13th century Church history, and his chapter devoted to the relations between York and Carlisle is full of interest, and contains much that is new.

Unlike the relations between York and Durham, those between York and Carlisle were, on the whole, free from discord. It is true that Archbishop Gray thought the Carlisle canons were too pro-Scottish, but, as Wilson showed, they were expelled in 1218.

Mr Brentano shows that the bishops of Carlisle were usually punctillious in their relations with York, gaining in 1290 praise from Archbishop Romeyn, who, chiding Bishop Bek of Durham and his clergy for their non-appearance at a convocation in York, reminded the erring bishop that the Carlisle proctors had arrived promptly, "though the lord bishop of Carlisle and his clerks . . . live farther away than you." It is true that a dispute arose between Archbishop Wickwane and the prior and convent of Carlisle, but this, an involved business, turns out to have been in large measure due to the Durham-York dispute, and all ended happily, with Prior Robert of Carlisle making the friendliest submission to the Archbishop.

3. *The Life and Works of William Carus Wilson 1791-1859* by Jane M. Ewbank; 30 pp., one plate, one folding chart pedigree, 5/- (Titus Wilson & Son Ltd., 1959).

One of the interesting things about the *Dictionary of National Biography* is its omissions. Why, for example, did Canon Rawnsley, a founder of the National Trust, fail to find a niche therein? And why was William Carus Wilson, founder of a famous girls' school, who provided two novelists with a character, omitted? To these and other questions of selection we shall probably never find the answers. That William Carus Wilson, the "Mr Brocklehurst" of "Jane Eyre," was deserving of a place in the D.N.B. would probably now be conceded. In this, the centenary year of his death, the omission has been made good by an excellent biographical study by a schoolgirl, at present at Casterton School, which Carus Wilson founded.

As Miss Ewbank truly observes, it is not easy to attempt at this stage the biography of one who died a hundred years ago,

especially since so many sources which would have yielded information have ceased to exist.

But the task of reconstructing his career has been gallantly tackled, and the result is a workmanlike biography, carefully documented, and scrupulously fair. Mr Roger Fulford hits the nail on the head when he observes in a foreword that nowadays — thanks largely to Charlotte Brontë — the impression is that Carus Wilson was a cross between Wackford Squeers and Mr Chadband. As Miss Ewbank shows, this is an unfair summing up. Carus Wilson may not have been a lovable character, but he had many virtues and certainly strove to do good to his fellow-men.

His narrow Churchmanship and the intolerance which went with it was, as Miss Ewbank says, by no means unusual in Victorian times, and it is by the standards of his day, and not by our own, that he must be judged.

Such sentiments as those expressed in the lines

*It's dangerous to provoke a God
Whose power and vengeance none can tell;
One stroke of his almighty rod
Can send young sinners quick to hell.*

were very popular in Victorian England and one has only to read such a book as Augustus Hare's *The Years with Mother* to realise that all too often the more devout people were, the more savagely did they treat children.

As Miss Ewbank says, Charlotte Brontë did not like Carus Wilson, whom she, in vivid phraseology, called "the black-marble clergyman" and he does not appear in a favourable light in "Jane Eyre," but, after all, that is fiction, and fiction, even if founded on fact, tends to be larger than life.

Miss Ewbank is well aware of this, and she sums up the life and character of Carus Wilson very fairly. Her notes on his ancestry and background, and the valuable family tree, all combine to make this monograph an excellent piece of work, an achievement upon which the youthful author may be heartily congratulated. She has made a capital beginning, and we look forward to many more books and papers from her competent pen.

4. *Local History in England* by W. G. Hoskins; 196 pp., illustrated, 21/- (Longmans, 1959).

More and more people are becoming interested in local history. It is therefore important that their interests should be canalised

in the right channels. This is what Mr Hoskins sets out to do in this very agreeable book, and he has accomplished his task very successfully. There is no doubt that most students will read his book with profit. Such a chapter as the one on health, disease and population, is, for example, full of fascinating and out of the way information. This is a field which will clearly be rewarding to the amateur parish historian, and, as Mr Hoskins suggests, the retired medical man, who is historically inclined, would find an investigation into epidemics and plagues an absorbing study. We are glad to see, too, that Mr Hoskins is a firm believer in the importance of old newspapers as an aid to research.

We commend this well written book to all who are anxious to embark on the study of local history.

5. *Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society Proceedings*, n.s. vi no. 1, April 1956 to March 1958 (pp. 64-80), contains a long and valuable paper by W. R. Serjeant entitled "John Christian Curwen, M.P., M.H.K., 1756-1828." A painting, done by John J. Halls in 1820 and engraved by Charles Turner, is reproduced, and there are interesting extracts from family papers at Workington and from the Atholl papers in the Manx Museum. Mr. Serjeant's account of the clash between Curwen and James Lowther, first earl of Lonsdale, here wrongly described as Lord Lowther, is most valuable.